

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

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R 260745Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2514
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE THE HAGUE 2306

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PDIP PINR NL
SUBJECT: NEW NETHERLANDS AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE AND SEOUL

1. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE NETHERLANDS AMBASSADOR TO SEOUL WILL BE ROLAND VAN DEN BERG AND THAT THE FORMER CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN SEOUL, WILLEM CHARLES ENGEL ALEXANDER DE VRIES, WILL BE THE NEW NETHERLANDS AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE.

2. DE VRIES WAS BORN JUNE 2, 1918, IN VELSON. HE ATTENDED THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN AND HAS A LAW DEGREE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN IN ADDITION TO HIS STUDIES OF CHINESE AND JAPANESE LANGUAGES. HE IS MARRIED TO HIS SECOND WIFE, THE FORMER HELENE VAN DER HOEVEN, AND THEY HAVE FOUR CHILDREN.

3. DE VRIES PRACTICED LAW BEFORE JOINING THE DUTCH FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1948. HE HAS ALWAYS SERVED OVERSEAS EXCEPT FOR A STINT IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR (1954-58). HIS POSTS INCLUDE NANKING (1948-51), PEKING (1951-53), CANBERRA (1959-62), TOKYO (1962-69), KOBE (1969-74) AND SEOUL FROM 1974 UNTIL HIS APPOINTMENT AS AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE.

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4. DE VRIES IS UNKNOWN TO THIS EMBASSY, BUT BIOGRAPHIC RECORDS INDICATE HE IS FRANK, GOOD HUMORED AND VERY FIENDLY TOWARD AMERICANS. POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY HE IS CONSIDERED QUITE CONSERVATIVE BUT NOT STUFFY. HE ENJOYS AND PLAYS EXCELLENT TENNIS. HIS ENGLISH IS GOOD.

5. HIS WIFE, LEENTJE, IS A SCHOLAR WHO WAS ORIGINALLLY A

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE OF PROF DUYVENDAK ("BOOK OF LORD SHANG."
"MING VOYAGES," ETC) AND WHILE IN JAPAN SHEEXPLORED THE ARCHIVES
AT TENRI TO WHICH VERY FEW FOREIGNERS HAVE ACCESS. SHE IS
AN ACCOMPLISHED LINGUIST: RUSSIAN, ENGLISH, GERMAN, FRENCH,
CHINESE AND SOME SPANISH.

6. AMEMBASSY SEOUL MAY WISH TO ADD FURTHER INFORMATION.

7. THE EMBASSY HAS ONLY NOMINAL BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT
VAN DEN BERG, NEW NETHERLANDS AMBASSADOR TO SEOUL. HE WAS
BORN IN SHANGHAI AUGUST 28, 1930. HE ATTENDED HIGH SCHOOL IN
CARMEL, CALIFORNIA, AND HAS A DEGREE IN CHINESE AND JAPANESE
LITERATURE AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS FROMTHE UNIVERSITY OF
LEIDEN. HE IS MARRIED TO THE FORMER CHRISTIANE M. REYERS.

8. HE JOINED THE DUTCH FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1957 AND HIS POSTS
INCLUDE THE MINISTRY (1957-61), PEKING (1962-66), THE MINISTRY
(1966-69), JAKARTA (1969-73) AND AS COUNSELOR FOR INFORMATION
IN BRUSSELS FROM 1973 UNTIL HIS APPOINTMENT AS
AMBASSADOR TO SEOUL.

9. EMBASSY BRUSSELS MAY WISH TO ADD ITS ASSESSMENT OF VAN DEN
BERG'S TOUR IN BELGIUM.
BROWN

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Message Attributes

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